



HOMAGE TO JOHN MACLEAN

Edited by T. S. Law and Thurso Berwick

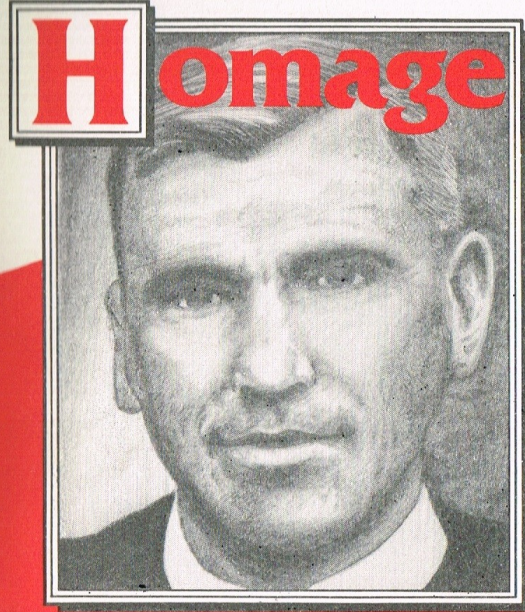
Foreword by Owen Dudley Edwards

Contributors include —

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to John Maclean

T.S. Law Thurso Berwick

1.00

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EDITED BY
T. S. LAW
THURSO BERWICK

EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY STUDENT PUBLICATIONS BOARD

FOREWORD

"On the occasion of the fiftieth commemoration of his death two new biographies were published, but in my opinion the very heart of the legend is contained in *Homage to John MacLean* . . ."

NAN MILTON

The first edition of *HOMAGE TO JOHN MACLEAN* was published by the John MacLean Society in 1973, the fiftieth anniversary of MacLean's death. It was sold out within a few weeks of publication. This second edition appears for the centenary of his birth. Although the editors, T. S. Law and Thurso Berwick, have in the interval received other offerings in memory of MacLean, the economics of book production as well as the special associations of the original volume, have militated against an enlargement of the text. With the exception of this foreword, and the cover-design, this is the work as it stood in 1973.

It is in its own right a volume of great significance, both on artistic and on historical grounds. John MacLean's career is a turning-point in the history of the interaction of Socialism and Nationalism in Scotland. Before him the great names — if we except such major but pre-Socialist influences as the poet Burns and the patriot Muir — were those of Scots who gave much of their Socialist ideology to countries to which they emigrated: the American Labour journalist John Swinton, the Welsh Independent Labour Party MP Keir Hardie, the Irish syndicalist organiser and theoretician James Connolly. Before they were any of these things they were Scots; but Scotland lost them. Yet MacLean picked up their diverse traditions, very notably that which had seemed to lapse when Connolly was shot after the Easter Rising of 1916 and his message engulfed in a bourgeois Irish violent nationalism renewing itself in sentimentalism and superstition. MacLean exhibited the internationalism of Swinton, the inspirationalism of Keir Hardie, and the conviction of Connolly that the future of Socialism lay not in super-states but in small nations.

The editors' introduction to the first edition very rightly saw in Hugh MacDiarmid the force "who countermanded the betrayal of MacLean" and added: "In so doing, MacDiarmid stands foursquare with MacLean for the honour of Scotland and the international proletariat". With the deepest sense of tragic loss this has now to be repeated in the past tense, but in other respects the tense can stand. MacDiarmid is alive, and it is due to him and to the poets he inspired that MacLean is alive. MacDiarmid was in his essence the great teacher, who drove Scots and those who love them to look at the lost heritage of the great Scottish tradition of radical nationalism and revere those, above all John MacLean, who devoted their lives to the hopes of the realisation of its ideals.

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What we have here, then, is a group of poems from many men and women who saw in John MacLean the inspiration of their own richest sense of identity and purpose. Some, such as Sorley Maclean, MacDiarmid himself, Sydney Goodsir Smith, Hamish Henderson and Edwin Morgan, are poets whose tribute to John MacLean is in the supremest sense the tribute of Art to Activism. Some are younger figures who have derived their consciousness of their radical Scottish identity to the inspiration of the great poets as well as to that of the man in whose shadow they all commonly stand. Some are people not normally given to poetry, but of whom John MacLean and his message have made poets. The work as a totality has everything to tell us about the impact of MacLean on the survival of Scottish culture as well as of Scottish Socialism. MacLean in terms of political statistics failed: in terms of ideas and art he triumphed. It is fitting that a publication firm run by students should sponsor this latest edition commemorating his poetic heritage, for his message enshrines the greatest hopes of the past and the most powerful warning to the future.

EUSPB,

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OWEN DUDLEY EDWARDS

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CLAN GHILL-EAIN

Chan e iadsan a bhàsaich
ann an àrdan Imbhir-Chéitein,
dh'aindeoin gaisge is uabhair,
ceann uachdrach ar sgeula;
ach esan bha 'n Glaschu,
ursann-chatha nam feumach,
Iain mór MacGill-Eain,
ceann is fèitheam ar sgeula.

CLAN MACLEAN

*Not they who died
in the hauteur of Inverkeithing,
in spite of valour and pride,
the high head of our story,
but he who was in Glasgow
the battlepost of the poor,
great John MacLean,
the top and hem of our story.*

JOHN MACLEAN (1879-1923)

All the buildings in Glasgow are grey
With cruelty and meanness of spirit.
But once in a while one greyer than the rest
A song shall merit
Since a miracle of true courage is seen
For a moment its walls between.

Look at it, you fools, with unseeing eyes
And denying it with lying lips!
But your craven bowels well know what it is
And hasten to eclipse
In a cell, as black as the shut boards of the Book
You lie by, the light no coward can brook.

It is not the blue of heaven that colours
The blue jowls of your thugs of police,
And "justice" may well do its filthy work
Behind walls as filthy as these
And congratulate itself blindly and never know
The prisoner takes the light with him as he goes below.

Stand close, stand close, and block out the light
As long as you can, you ministers and lawyers,
Hulking brutes of police, fat bourgeoisie,
Sleek derma for congested guts—its fires
Will leap through yet; already it is clear
Of all MacLean's foes not one was his peer.

As Pilate and the Roman soldiers to Christ
Were Law and Order to the finest Scot of his day,
One of the few true men in our sordid breed,
A flash of sun in a country all prison-grey.
Speak to others of Christian charity; I cry again
For vengeance on the murderers of John MacLean.

Let the light of truth in on the base pretence
Of Justice that sentenced him behind these grey walls.
All law is the contemptible fraud he declared it.
Like a lightning bolt at last the workers' wrath falls
On all such castles of cowards whether they be
Uniformed in ermine, or blue, or khaki.

Royal honours for murderers and fools! The "fount of honour"
Is poisoned and spreads its corruption all through,
But Scotland will think yet of the broken body
And unbreakable spirit, MacLean, of you,
And know you were indeed the true tower of its strength,
As your prison of its foul stupidity, at length.

TO JOHN MACLEAN TORTURED IN A CAPITALIST PRISON

Comrade right valiant with heart and with head
Comrade who always the Vanguard has led
Comrade your sufferings shall not be in vain!
Thousands are greeting you: "Hail, John MacLean!"

Full well we know what you've done, what you've dared,
How all your actions with conscience are squared;
Now that we've heard of your torture and pain
Thousands will stand by you: "Hail, John MacLean!"

Hark, through your prison bars thunders the call
"To hell with the torturers! Down with them all!"
Capital's power 's at last on the wane!
Millions are helping you; "Hail, John MacLean!"

Men such as Liebknecht and you are our need,
The People are rising; they ask for your lead;
They seek out the men of staunch heart and good brain,
They honour you . . . follow you . . . "Hail, John MacLean!"

DOMINIE, DOMINIE

(Tune: *Original*)

CHORUS: *Dominie, Dominie,
There was nane like John MacLean,
The fighting Dominie.*

Tell me where ye're gaun lad, and who ye're gaun to meet—
I'm headed for the station that's in Buchanan Street,
I'll join 200,000 that's there to meet the train
That's bringing back to Glasgow our own dear John MacLean:

Tell me whaur he's been, lad, and why has he been there?
They've had him in the prison for preaching in the Square,
For Johnny held a finger at all the ills he saw,
He was right side o' the people, but he was wrong side o' the law:

Johnny was a teacher in one of Glasgow's schools;
The golden law was silence but Johnny broke the rules,
For a world o' social justice young Johnny couldnae wait,
He took his chalk and easel to the men at the shipyard gate:

The leaders o' the nation made money hand o'er fist
By grinding down the people by the fiddle and the twist,
Aided and abetted by the preacher and the Press—
John called for revolution and he called for nothing less:

The bosses and the judges united as one man
For Johnny was a danger to their '14-'18 plan,
They wanted men for slaughter in the fields of Armentiers,
John called upon the people to smash the profiteers:

They brought him to the courtroom in Edinburgh toun,
But still he didnae cower, he firmly held his ground,
And stoutly he defended his every word and deed,
Five years it was his sentence in the jail in Peterheid:

Seven months he lingered in prison misery
Till the people rose in fury, in Glasgow and Dundee,
Lloyd George and all his cronies were shaken to the core,
The prison gates were opened, and John was free once more.

THE JOHN MACLEAN MARCH

(Tune: *Traditional*)

Hey Mac, did ye see him as ye cam' doon by Gorgie,
Awa ower the Lamerlaw or north o' the Tay?
Yon man is comin', and the haill toon is turnin' oot:
We're a' shair he'll win back tae Glesgie the day.
The jiners and hauders-on are marchin' frae Clydebank;
Come on noo an' hear him—he'll be ower thrang tae bye.
Turn oot, Jock and Jimmie: leave your crans and your muckle gantries.

Great John MacLean's comin' back tae the Clyde.
Great John MacLean's comin' back tae the Clyde.

Argyle Street and London Road's the route that we're marchin'—

The lads frae the Broomielaw are here— tae a man!
Hi Neil, whar's your hadarums, ye big Heilan teuchter?

Get your pipes, mate, an' march at the heid o' the clan.

Hullo Pat Malone: sure I knew ye'd be here so:

The red and the green, lad, we'll wear side by side.

Gorbals is his the day, and Glesgie belongs tae him.

Ay, Great John MacLean's comin' hame tae the Clyde.

Great John MacLean's comin' hame tae the Clyde.

Forward tae Glesgie Green we'll march in guid order:

Wull grips his banner weel (that boy isna blate).

Ay there, man, that 's Johnnie noo—that's him there, the bonnie fechter.

Lenin's his fiere, lad, an' Liebknecht's his mate.

Tak tent when he's speakin', for they'll mind whit he said here

In Glesgie, oor city—an' the haill warld beside.

Och hey, lad, the scarlet's bonnie: here's tae ye, Hieland Shony!

Oor John MacLean has come hame tae the Clyde.

Oor John MacLean has come hame tae the Clyde.

Aweel, when it's feenished, I'm awa back tae Springburn.

(Come hame tae your tea, John, we'll sune hae ye fed).

It's hard work the speakin': och, I'm shair he'll be tired the nicht.

I'll sleep on the flair, Mac, and gie John the bed.

The haill city's quiet noo: it kens that he's restin'

At hame wi his Glesgie freens, their fame and their pride!

The red will be worn, my lads, an' Scotland will march again.

Noo great John MacLean has come hame tae the Clyde.

Great John MacLean has come hame tae the Clyde.

MR JOHN MACLEAN, M.P. (Tune: *Private Michael Cassidy, V.C.*)

Comrade John MacLean's the man we want to top the poll!
A fighter born and bred, he's in the fight with heart and soul.
So if you meet a man who seems to hesitate or doubt,
And don't know who to vote for, just go up to him and shout:

CHORUS

John MacLean—he's come out of Jail again—

John MacLean—the Tyrant's enemy!

If you want to end the Workers' grief and pain,

Make him Mr John MacLean, M.P.

Thrice we've trusted Geordie Barnes, and found that we've been sold,
For when he went to Parliament he did what he was told;
But now we've got a man who dares the Master class oppose;
If you want to know his name, well, this is how it goes—

CHORUS

When the Factors started out to try their monkey tricks,
And threatened—if they got no rent—they'd surely pin our sticks!
Who was it told us, one and all, we should refuse to pay,
And got us organised, and led us on to victory?

CHORUS

The Coalition gang are out to promise us the earth:
But we have heard that tale before and know what it is worth!
So now we're going to have the land, and give the boss the sack,
For Labour has arisen, and has found the man to back!

*John MacLean—he's come out of Jail again—
John MacLean—the Tyrant's enemy!
If you want to end the Workers' grief and pain,
Make him Mr John MacLean, M.P.*

RED STAR

Frae auld man's een I'm dichtin bairnie's tears,
As mindfu hou you kythed in khaki claes
When aff we gaed to fecht wi fermit faes:
Scule freens. Lang deid and yerdit wi the years!
In solis herts we happit doutes and fears.
Reformist cuifs had conscience stounds thae days:
Our cause was theirs, they deaved our lugs wi praise;
But fecht's nae place for folk that hae careers.

Our umwhile "reds" hae Steenie's howf for hame:
Ae man there was that puit their shams to shame;
In dowi jyle they thocht his spunk to dern.

Creep back, ye scunners—in ablow your stane.
You downa thole the licht o John MacLean
That rings abune— mair nor Martian stern.

JOHN MACLEAN MARTYR

*I am not here, then, as the accused; I am here as the accuser
of Capitalism dripping with blood from head to foot.—J.M.*

I

The bluid he saw dreeps yet
A black affront til men
That bluid nor love can mend
Ere man shall get
At the world's end
Remeid frae his teeman debt.

II

Whiles, frae out the ruck
There rises a MacLean
hauds black in 's bluid, but vain,
The wyte man taks
Frae man for the shame
That's paid wi a price mair black.

III

Abune the grey stane tenements
The mune lowes reid
As man's ain martyrs feed the gleid
Wi the carrion stink is sent
Up frae the world's desert deid
—The reik o' man's dismemberment.

THE BALLANT O' JOHN MACLEAN

Founder of the Scottish Workers' Republican Party
Died St Andrew's Day, 1923

I for one am out for a Scottish Workers' Republic—J.M.

Muir and Wallace his prison mates,
Lenin and Connolly,
Nane ither ever was his maik—
But ithers there will be.

Though mocked and hated, crucified,
And mocked and jailed again,
Yet never dowsit they the gleid
He lit on Glesca Green.

The Mongers triumphed ower sune
As they herryit him til daith—
Ae day their micht'll crottle doun
And freedom get her braith.

Ahint his corp through broukit streets
Three miles o murners thrang—
He wan the hate o' the Monger breed
But the love o' his ain was strang.

Turn ower in your sleep, MacLean,
Nane is michty as the deid,
Speak your daithless speak again
—The evil gets their ain remeid.

"I staund no as the Accused," he said,
Til the lords in cramasie,
"But as the Accuser of your state
Biggit on gowd and infamie!

"I see your guilt there rinnan doun,
Heid til fruit the bluid rins reid;
Ye're loftit there like gods abune,
But the feet are clay and the hairt's deid."

Ay, tods hae dens, the birds nest,
But whar's the Son o' Man to rest?
On prison stanes they laid his heid
And prison brose was all his breid.

A great hairt warslan in a cell
Like a live bird in a cage;
Ahint the bars o' a stane hell
They brak the eagle o' the age.

But they couldna dowse his words o' flame
Nor dim his memorie—
Turn ower in your sleep, MacLean!
Scotland has need o' ye!

TO THE MEMORY OF JOHN MACLEAN, M.A.

Why do the crowds assemble, why do the tear-drops fall?
Why is the solemn music played, the march of death from Saul?
Old and young are weeping, moved by the sad refrain,
As the march to the grave with a rebel—our comrade John MacLean.

He smiled in the face of danger, with torture his hair was grey,
He feared not the bars of the prison, his path was the thorny way;
He sneered at the traitors and cowards, he battled with might and main
To free us for ever from bondage, did comrade John MacLean.

Woe to the tyrants ruling who sneer at his resting clay,
The power they have o'er people will yet be swept away.
When workers rise from slumber to break the binding chain,
'Tis then they'll understand the words of comrade John MacLean.

He looked on a world of plenty and saw the makers starve,
He then proclaimed this should not be when parasites could carve.
In war he saw the workers killed, the tyrants to maintain,
"All power to those who make all things!" cried comrade John MacLean.

He longed to see the dawn of light break thro' the darkened skies.
The men who knelt at Mammon's shrine he always did despise.
He told the truth and shamed the world, he suffered grief and pain.
We seldom see a man so brave as comrade John MacLean.

Although the grave his body holds, his soul they cannot kill,
They are but fools who think him dead, his spirit's with us still,
The firm determination with courage to attain,
Were left us as a legacy by comrade John MacLean.

Good men are few and far between, they leave their mark and go.
And John MacLean was one of those who struck a deadly blow
At all the vile hypocrisy, the murder and the stain
That cloaked itself in pious robes to fight against MacLean.

Then let us o'er his ashes swear and by the tears he shed
"We'll never rest till o'er the earth there flies the flag of Red!"
This fight for Human Brotherhood can never be in vain,
"The darkest hour's before the dawn!" said comrade John MacLean.

fae A CYCLE O MACLEANS

I

S'ANT MAJOR MACLEAN

I hae kent MacLeans: the furst I hae in mynd
a schuil janitor we aye c^{ad} Mister MacLean.
Familiaritie wi him bred nane
o thon auld nonsense aboot contemp. He was
S'ant Major MacLean, as wuiden-faced, as straucht
as a stoot stab i the grund, nae stookie tho, but sherp,
thin-lippit, tongue tripplin as quick as the glent o his een
smert sodger. "Aboot turn," he wuid say, an birl,
as jimp as a pooter peerie, peare-kistit hiss.

At the Christmas pairtie at the schuil, ben wuid step
MacLean, beezed-up an galus as the six
braw colours in the garb o a dacent bard,
an strampin brawlie the lenth o the lang schuilhaa,
his ceremonials a paper glengairrie
wi' streamers flein fae it, and ower his shootheer
a chair upsyde doon as bagpype the-tyme he garred
neb-music tirl as tho the pype itsel
was in his thrapple, thon soond the firl an dunt
o the heidarum-hodarum o his young recruitment
yon day whan MacLean was the pryde o the paerochen,
sap-wuid i the shaws tae growe an set i the roond
an runes o the regimental years until
he stuid hard, strenthie, king o the wuids amang
the thinned-oot growthe the Passchendaele plorie made
o the lave o the singing youth o the Scottish forest.

Athooten regimentals, tho, he was
a corner-stab o a man: and the bairns aa kent it.

Wuiden heidit as weel as wuiden-faced! The bairns
wuid say naither eechie nor ochie anent him, kennin
the honestie o wuid is no byordnar.
Nocht else aboot the man is byordnar aither:
he stuid his grund i the weire, and didnae rin,
but didnae faa lik his paer waanchancie fieres,
an bidd as thrawn as John MacLean hiss
whaa stuid an focht oor ain lang weire, but fell
because he naither was the man tae rin.

2

JOHN MACLEAN, REPUBLICAN

The reevolutiounarie thing
about macLean was that he kent
whit he was dacin was whit he meant,
an did it lik a sang tae sing.

He was nae rebal gane aglye
lik the coonter-reevolutiounarie
whaa kens wi sic a sair oncairrie
his maister's rascal-tascal py
aye tells him whit he'll no be dacin,
an cannae tho he pech an pant
lik onie grampus; mowt an mant
as he may, he speils reaction, sayin,
"This here fae you I'll tak for me,
that thare I'll gie tae him fae you,
thon thonder tae for him the noo,
and aa thir here tae me I'll gie;
gae lowp an rin the haill day thru."

Watch oot for him the horallie bairn:
a steerin laud's a stacherin man;
he'll con ye an pawn ye as shuin as he can;
he'll spyle ye and jyle ye in mortar and airn.

It's up the road and dae's ye're telt,
an back again an gasp and gape;
it's beg an bou, an scart and scrape,
an for the boss caa oot yer melt.

Tho we are aften bellowses
whan yokit tae rebellioun's braes,
MacLean sklimmed on wi stuidie pace,
an did his devoirs aa his days,
an didnae staun baith blate an sweir
bi gushet-heid twaa wys tae rin
but gaed the causey croun abuin
or else i the middis o the square.

Sae thon snell blast that slew MacLean
Saunt Aundra's Day in Twintie-Three,
smooored yae great licht waanchancilie
that micht hae seen us hame again.

An tho oor days ootbye be shorte,
wi little tyme tae sing or craw,
may the auld deil that's in us aa
ryse up lik John MacLean in Coort
tae tell oor glowerin maisters this—
we'll no abyde nor lae alane
the sorte o folk betrayed MacLean,
the man whause name we sing an praise;
a noble name, in him as pure
as thon ruid gowd intae the suin,
or siller lights the lillie muin.
or sauter-blue platinum tholes fire:
an see whaa can, an ken whaa see,
conjunk they mak a nobler yin
byordnar in its puritie,
MacLean the alloy o the free.

THE KRASSIVY POEM

Scotland has had few men whose names
Matter—or should matter—to intelligent people,
But of these MacLean, next to Burns, was the greatest
And it should be of him, with every Scotsman and Scotswoman
To the end of time, as it was of Lenin in Russia
When you might talk to a woman who had been
A young girl in 1917 and find
That the name of Stalin lit no fires,
But when you asked her if she had seen Lenin
Her eyes lighted up and her reply
Was the Russian word which means
Both beautiful and red.
Lenin, she said, was "*krassivy, krassivy*,"
John MacLean too was "*krassivy, krassivy*,"
A description no other Scot has ever deserved.

PERFERVIDUM INGENIUM SCOTORUM

(Tune: *The Wark o the Weavers*)

We're aa met thegither here, but no tae sit an crack,
For Fortune's wheel is turnin, birlin fae the black,
We lost oor Independence, but we're gaun tae get it back,
Wi Perfervidum Ingenium Scotorum:

*Wi Perfervidum Ingenium ye hear the ring o bells,
Ye watch the Wheel o Fortune an see whit it fortells:
We'll win oor Independence, ay, by takin it oorsels,
Wi Perfervidum Ingenium Scotorum.*

We dinna want the white moose, we dinnae want the grey,
We dinnae want the middle moose thit fears the brek o day,
It's no a time for timorousness. It's time tae brek away,
Wi Perfervidum Ingenium Scotorum:

CHORUS

Now there's some wad sell thir mithers for a ha'penny or a cent,
There's some wad sell the Scottish folk a puppet parliament,
But the rebel wheel is turnin, an we'll scotch thir ill-intent,
Wi Perfervidum Ingenium Scotorum:

CHORUS

Sae here's tae George Buchanan, wis first tae gie 't a name,
An here's tae William Wallace an John MacLean,
An here's tae Bonnie Scotland—we'll see her free again,
Wi Perfervidum Ingenium Scotorum:

*Wi Perfervidum Ingenium ye hear the ring o bells,
Ye watch the Wheel o Fortune an see whit it fortells:
We'll win oor Independence, ay, by takin it oorsels,
Wi Perfervidum ingenium Scotorum.*

ON JOHN MACLEAN

Echoes rise from footfalls into legend
whan men march round a sated citadel
and turn a prophet-hero's shafts of vision
to seven trumpets to confound the walls.
Oh legend-echoes climb the screes of time
and swell to fanfares on a peak of will . . .
intense, incensed . . .
till deadwood on the day's decanted slopes
comes falling from the linn-loosed battle-plumes
to plunge its end in cataracts of revolt.

MacLean, our John MacLean,
strong and sombre in a night of death,
stood out against a looming citadel
where evil glinted midst the bannered panes,
and filling up his lungs with winds of knowledge
pronounced his vision flight by flight
in trumpet-calls of morning challenge.

The notes fell flaring on tomorrow's shore,
and sap in wisdom's never-ending trees
sang slow responses to his soaring claims.
And people,
the people on the surer side of legend
made merry in a mighty tribute-dance
on cultivated sites of long-long-levelled walls.

When legend fills the echoes of new footfalls
with harmonies and contrapuntals of MacLean
then will the seven trumpets sound again . . .
and the walls will shake,
and quiver,
and go down.

THE DARG O JOHN MACLEAN

I mind on the speech o Pasternak
at the First Writers' Congress—
he wanted, he said, to lift
fae the shouthers o the workin quine in the Metro
the wecht o her wark-loom,
and that aa o a sudden, she
was a sister to him
and he wanted to help her
as gin she'd been an auld an dear frien.

You
did mair nor want, John MacLean;
ye socht an focht to lift
fae aff the shouthers o working fowk
the Atlas wecht o centuries,
the doon-drag an trauchle
that gart the warld birl,
iled by the bleed o men.

A thocht yon;
to heist the yirth fae its aixle-tree
till the back-bane could staund up straucht
and caa itsel—a man.
Naething less nor that, and that
but a pint on the rim o aathing
ye lived and deid for.

Nou fiftie year efter the yirth took ye in
Scotland still stands it seems
a Winter Palace o the spirit,
and your time-boomb—a whuff o Lenin's breath—
ticks on aneath that wecht.

Oor poems are rhetoric
to your life and death—
the future conscience o the yirth.

THE ACCUSER

*Thrie figures. A woman staunin left,
a man staunin richt, and atween them a man
recumbent. The staunin figures speak first.*

WOMAN

Ma name is Alba,
the lass of Scotland,
cheatit an raggit,
a lass o dule.

MAN

An I'm the Worker
wha bydes in cities,
or stamps the glaur
ahint the ploo.

ALBA

Aneath ma rags
ma body's bonnie,
ma bluid is rich,
ma een can shine:
but, hech, I'm left
ma lane, ma lane,
for few Scots ettle
to loo me mair.

WORKER

Ma warld is fear
o war an want:
ma warld is wark
for war an daith.

ALBA

Eh whiles I wunner
hou ma lovers can be
sae daurk-deid blin . . .
for the foreigners tak
the gowd o ma body,
the life o ma love,
kenspeckle, lauchan
ahint their sleeves.

But ma ain daft Scots
eat stour an daith
an see nae skaith.

WORKER

This is the warld the workers hae,
aye short o goods in war
an short o siller in peace
The maisters cheyng
but aye the tune's the same . . .
the morn aa ye workers will rejoyce . . .
ay, aye the morn . . .
while carbines ding oot sangs frae skeletons,
an lood lood mous are screichan blye for bluid,
an the whup is whusslan owre oor heids.

ALBA

I watch ma weans gae staucheran owre the yerth,
in ilka generation aye the same.
I watch ma weans gae staucheran owre the yerth
while aa the time slee foreign hauns
steal aa the riches o their richtfu hame.

WORKER

We Scots hae never ettled efter land
o ither chiels o black or yalla skin,
yet aye oor louns are caa'd to dee
on desert saun,
neath muckle tropic tree,
or in the glaur o Europe's feckless fields.
For whit? For why?
In peace I've shouthered the cauld street-corner
wi empty pooches roon ma tradesman's hauns,
an maist been pey'd to tak them oot
to forge the daftsom instruments
that crack the yerth an blaw puir chiels to bits.

ALBA

Ma breists are aye as doucelie fou
o kindliness
an hospitalitie,
an ma hert aye dances til a raucle tune,
an ma love is bydan for ma sons,

for yon blye day they will decide
to set me free.
Eh, whitna glory could we no hae won,
whit honest lauchter could we no hae lousd
against the ugsom mou o war,
whit lessons could we no hae spun
to teach the warld the wey to leeve,
gif only aa ma lovers huid been leal!
But na . . .
wi mimpin mous exploitin Rabbie Burns
owre money turnt their heids awa
to pomp an gowd
an dwaums o pooer o the Inglis bree,
an lee'd me warsslin i the fause louns' airms,
touselt, trachelt an miscaa'd.

WORKER

Whit could I dae?
I puit ma strenth o airm
to skech a leevin for ma faimlie,
sae whit wuis lee'd me efter darg
to keep ye blye?

ALBA

Hou lang, hou lang will aa ma louns
lee me be pandert by ane fremit lear?
This body has been raped by auntran faes,
thir briests aa bruised by siller-stinkin mous,
this wame aa raxit wi the birth o weans
to sen til daith or faur acorss the warld . . .
and oh, oh, oh
the black, black burning o ma hert-deep shame!

WORKER

We need a licht.
We need a raucle haun to stert a bleeze
bricht eneuch to coost its schene
intil the office an the factory,
the citie dunnie an the Heilan croft
till aa Scots see
the larrach that oor countrie is.

ALBA

A gey leal lover did I hae sinsyne,
a chiel whase speak gaed thrummlin throu ma heid,
a dominie for vauntie weans at schule,
a dominie furbye for aa forfochen Scots,
a hamespun byspale richt for ony ploy
wi stourie dons or girnin scarlet judges,
a chiel wha brak his hert
an tuimt his life
in a laneousome fecht wi the mongers' Moloch.

The sleepin figure waukens

I chaunt the passionale o John MacLean,
a chiel compoundit o the leid o Marx,
the raucle pride of Glesca workers' life,
the singing weys o Hielan glens,
an a braid braid love for aa humanitie.

MacLean stauns.

MACLEAN

Wha is't caas me
frae the flichterin skaddas
o tynt memore?
Wha is't names me
i this ditherin day
o Scotland's historie?
Gif I come here again
intil the comontie o Scots
syne it maun be as the Accuser;
the Accuser o aa thae smirkin birks
sae thirlit til whigmaleerie pouer
wha've led oor working lads an lassies
intil the auld auld treacherie . . .
I come here as the Accuser
o thae tynt bumbaized by Inglis gowd,
be they on the Left or on the Richt,
wha keep the glinkin staur o Scotland
smoor'd in obscurantist haar.
I maun come
no as the Forgotten
wha deserves a mindin,
but as the reminder
o Scottis struggle an Scottis skaith.

ALBA

Hech, hou ma hert
lowps wi new bluid!

WORKER

Ah John,
ma heid is dirlin wi virr again.
Tell us the road ye'd hae us gae.

MACLEAN

I, John MacLean,
I, the Accuser,
I, the Reminder,
I for one
wuld lowse the Scottis sprit
frae the daurk jyle of feckless days
an set it fleein like ane laverock.
I for one
am for a Scotland redd or regal rypin,
redd o lairds wha byde in London mercats,
redd or menseless doyt's wi shilpit guts
wha lowp til London's biddin.
I for one
wuld mak ilk Scottis haun a hammer
to brak the cheynes
the years o traitorie hae twisted roun
aa Scottis harns;
wuld mak ilk Scottis tang a sickle
to sheeve awa
the misgotten fouth o lees
that smoor an dwine
the bonnie flouers o Scottis mense.
I for one
wuld tak the soonds o ilka honest ploy,
the soonds o hauns an tools at wark
on wuid an stane, on airn an claith;
the soonds o coontin, tellin, scribevin;
the soonds o auntran sort o makar
giean byordnar dwaums a shape;
the soonds o lowsit folk, gey cantie,
peyin their scores wi lauchter's gowd—
I'd tak the hail eident clanjamphrey
an uise the intellect an hert for scales

an wab sic harmonie an contrapuntals
wuld gar the frichtfu freit, daurk Capital,
gae screichan away accross the Border,
hiding his bluidwyte hauns . . .
an lee the Scots to mak the Thrie Estates
juist Ane.
Sae come, ma Alba,
lass o Scotland,
lang respectit i the lear o man . . .
an you, ma brither o an ancient line . . .
lee us link oor hauns thegither
for ilk-ither's sake,
an the sake o trachelt fowk aa owre the warld.

The clasp hauns in tableau.

WORDS FOR JOHN MACLEAN

Scotland seems to happen in the past tense.
There is a swell of pride, a deep conviction
That sometime there was a land of innocence,
A land without a flaw whose facts and fiction
Were interchangeable and whose causes were just
In every case. There was murder at Flodden
And dear dead flowers who fell, there was that dust
That covered those who at Culloden
Left their blood to soak the bleak peat moor.
There was a prince whose Highland heart followed
his mind to thoughts of London, and a poor
Peasant who became a preacher and then swallowed
Half the seeds of Scotland's future. There was
A tenant-farmer who made a brilliant melody
And a fearless advocate who died so that the cause
Of the people should ultimately prevail, should finally
Triumph. And it has all happened, all been done,
Is all in our past, though not necessarily so.
There came from Pollockshaws a potter's son
Who frankly told old Scotland where to go.
And if we heed the deeds of John MacLean
Scotland will not be the same again.

TIL JOHN MACLEAN

Marx your faither, your mither wes the Clyde.
You, throu aa your life, were true ti' them baith.
Whaur they conflictit, it was hard to side
Wi either, and 'tween the twae, in fear and faith
You struggled ti' manhood. Lenin set the pace
And the socialist world wes cast in a Russian mould,
The only pattern, it seemed, for the human race:
Ither lands to be sheep in the Russian fold.

But the Clyde maun find its ain wey oot ti' sea
And you, like Marx nae Marxist, glegly saw
(As Broz did later in Yugoslavia)
That ilka land its national weird maun dree:
Sae wi Marx's tools you wrocht the Scottish nation
a socialism for Scotland's ain salvation.

SIC A LAND AS THIS

(A tribute to John MacLean)

Whit manner o man was this?
For I, wha didna ken him,
can only caa him "man."
An yet, by aa accoonts, nae ordnar man.
Noble, wi that aristocracy o mind
that has nae need of pedigree or land
tae gie it lastin worth.
His was a vision. Bleezin,
bluid rid, across the firmament.
Owre bricht for lesser men tae watch.

(Whaur were they then, the people's fieres,
when he set aa the lift alowe?
Haudin their heids ablow the clathes
for fear their feeble sicht was tint!)

God! Was ever sic a land as this
whaur men o worth are case aside
an auld dune sarks applauded?

Three heroes, worthy o the name, we've had
—an tint them aa!
Wallace, betrayed tae England's murderin croon,
Muir, banished tae a foreign shore,
an John MacLean. Died frae a muckle dose
o great Britannic justice.

"A! Freedom is a noble thing!"
an scarce the Scot that's worthy o it.
Following fause prophets what tint the wey
as suin as they set oot.
Buryin us aa, oot o the world's kennin
happed in an Anglo Saxon shroud.

"The fault is nocht. I dar weel take on hand
Nother in the people nor the land
As for the land it lackis na uther thing
Bot laubor and the pepyllis governyng."
Oh! sic a land as this
that, in a fower hunner year,
has yet tae learn that text.
Sir David Lyndsay syne MacLean
hae gien the ward an lit the flame
but still the vision is owre bricht
for purblin Scots tae seize.

Aye, even noo, their neypsie nebs
are coontin oot the cost
an playin Shylock
wi oor sovereign richts.

"Black be the day that e'er to England's ground
Scotland was eikit by the Union's bond."
An blacker still the day
when balance sheets were taen tae be
the measure o a nation's richts.
God grant us grace,
an muckle grace we need,
that we maun yet contrive
tae heft this nation frae its knees,
keist faur its crutch
an, staunin straucht afore the warl,
lay claim tae whit's its ain.

No as a bankbuik
weel entered on the credit side,
but as a people
solvent in oor ain identity.

REMEMBER JOHN MACLEAN

(Tune: *Johnny Ramensky*)

CHORUS *John MacLean, John MacLean,
wi' his courage an' his brain.
Scotland will be free
if we remember John MacLean.*

O, John showed aa the workers
that came tae Shawlands Cross
juist why a lousy system
always gets a lousy boss.

His economics classes
were packed-oot aa his life
wi shipyard men an' engineers,
an' miners through in Fife.

He never looked at baith sides,
he knew which side, was which.
He gied the workers confidence
an' terrified the rich.

He fought against Conscription,
he fought against the War,
an' he showed the Scottish workers
what they should be fighting for.

He organised the unemployed,
he fought for shorter hours,
he fought for the locked-oot miners,
an' he fought for Workers' Power.

The landlords thought they'd raise the rents
an' charge juist what they liked,
but the women folk refused to pay
an' the shipyards went on strike.

Wi' John MacLean tae lead them,
the slogan was "Attack!"
an' a hundred thousand workers
passed the Rents Restriction Act.

He fought for the Irish people,
he was Ireland's greatest friend;
against the might of Empire
he backed them to the end.

The bosses feared an' hated him
an' the magic o' his name.
They jailed him an' they jailed him
but they couldnae break MacLean.

Tae the Russian Revolution
he gave everything he had.
He wanted Glasgow City
to be another Petrograd.

He became Bolshevik Consul,
the notorious MacLean,
but the Government framed another charge,
an' he went tae jail again.

He was a noble fighter
that they couldnae break nor bend,
but grim November weather
overtook him in the end.

So let us honour John MacLean
an' hold his message fast,
an' Scotland will be taken
by the Scottish Working Class.

JOHN MACLEAN

General Election 1922

The banner of
The Scottish Workers' Republican Party.
The first and last time?

30th November 1923

John MacLean dead, aged 44.

Quote—This valiant fighter has not been forgotten.
Next year a cairn will be erected to his memory.
Much of what he wrote is being reprinted.
This man, who died at the age of 44, gave
All he had to give for the cause

he believed in.—*End quote.*
—Harry McShane, "Remembering John MacLean,"

New Edinburgh Review, Number 19, 1972.

November 1972, I sit and write of this man,
The rebel, clean cut and true,
But the crux of history, does it make him
Like MacDiarmid now, almost respectable,
A great man, but yet another crank to
Scotland's cause?

Good for the academic indulging in ideas,
Sitting in his dusty cell.
Good to have cocktail-debate about how
Clydeside, Scotland might have gone.

(Old age and death are easy to handle.)

Ay, it's so easy to deal with ideas
From the distance of time and place;
It's so easy for us to make pleas,
Memory against the Capitalist race.

It's so easy, or yet is it the case
That MacLean, MacDiarmid have given words
To what the mass truly believe.

Is it that they had courage
When it was easier, more comfortable for us
To be cowards in a cowardly place.

It's so easy to join the ranks
of mass complacency;
It's so easy to believe in the great crank
—voice of your spirit—
But keep him well from the public eye.
A few against the mass, you cannot deny
it's a cause doomed to fail.

At the right time, the right place,
you would swell the ranks, oh yes.

Was there a right time, a right place
for MacDiarmid, MacLean.

Spew of a sick race,
you disgrace the brain.

Spew of a sick race,
can you not see,
all that is needed
is INTEGRITY.

Spew of a sick race,
think well
EACH MAN LIVES
IN TIME AND PLACE

TIL THE CITIE O JOHN MACLEAN

They've rieved the live rose frae the leaf
An bluidit aa her snawy bosom;
Bit rose-buds wheesh the rose-tree's grief
An fresh hir rue til reasoun.

They've rowpt oor hames an gien us slums,
Black-reekit, chokit wi thir factries;
Bit rivets, reid-hot in thir wames,
Wull efter-birth thir victries.

They've taen oor bluid tae mak thir gowd
An stuid us idle, lean an lankit;
Bit nou black's birlan roun ti reid
—They're drunk at Yankee's banquet.

Then get the lethers on the waa,
 An gie thir gates Auld Scotland's shouter;
 An suid thir heids til Freedom faa,
 Twull redd them oot the smoothen
 The doors are down—the stairs are down—
 Lat nane come near athout bean thankit!
 Fur Auld Lang Syne, then—aa breenge in!
 —A MacLean is at yuir Banquet!

An thank ye braw. An thank ye rife.
 We thank ye, John, wi reid o roses,
 Thit, lowan wi life abuin yuir grave,
 Wull mind us aye whaur lies—no!—ryses
 The giant wha toured up in the dock
 Wi eagle een on Scotland's wrackers,
 An rowed aside that muckle rock
 Thit stappit the mou o her makars.

They've rieved the live rose frae the leaf
 An bluidit aa hir snawy bosom;
 Bit rose-buds lave wi reivers' bluid.
 Wull lowe wi loe, come simmer seasoun,
 Whin, Citie, prood o John MacLean,
 Ye ryse again!
 An braw wi reid rutes in the Clyde,
 Ye guide the world.
 Ti flourish.

THE FREEDOM COME-ALL-YE

(Tune: *The Bloody Fields o Flanders*)

Roch the wind in the clear day's dawin,
 Blaws the clouds heelster-gowdie ow'r the bay,
 But there's mair nor a roch wind blawin
 Through the great glen o the world the day.
 It's a thocht that will gar oor rottans
 Aa thae rogues that gang gallus, fresh and gay,
 Tak the road an seek ither loanins
 For their ill ploys, tae sport an play.

Nae mair will the bonnie callants
 Maich tae war when oor braggarts crouselly craw,
 Nor wee weans frae pit-heid an clachan
 Mourn the ships sailin doon the Broomielaw;
 Broken families, in lands we've herriet
 Will curse Scotland the Brave nae mair, nae mair;
 Black and white, ane ti ither, mairriet,
 Mak the vile barracks o their maisters bare.

O come all ye at hame wi freedom,
 Never heed whit the hoodies croak for doom;
 In your hoose aa the bairns o Adam
 Can find breid, barley-bree an painted room.
 When MacLean meets wi 's freens in Springburn,
 Aa the roses and geans will turn tae bloom,
 And a black boy frae yont Nyanga
 Dings the fell gallows o the burghers doon.

THE HUNTERS

(for John MacLean)

It's easy to befriend the dead.
 The spent bullet is anyone's
 as long as it missed the mark, that is.

The hunters will make it their property.
 For the moral will prove too good to lose.

"He won no prizes, I'll be bound,"
 they'll say.

They'll question the ground on which he stood
 They'll hint at a rather unsteady hand.

"Not Clynes as mill-hand, ten years old,
 not John Burns in his Red Flag days,
 not Ramsay the starveling pedagogue,
 not even McGovern in his youth
 nor the Paisley mechanic Gallacher
 fired with so little guile," they'll say.

And they'll pity the poor tyro then.

He'll be their companion in the field,
a comfort when the bag is bare.
"Couldn't judge distances, you see.
Couldn't bide his time, a man like that,
as all good hunters must," they'll say.

So easy to befriend the dead,
mould in half-truths the image we will,
accomplish in him our own design.

For John would let the bird fly free,
the hunters he went out to kill.

ON JOHN MACLEAN

"I am not prepared to let Moscow dictate to Glasgow."
Failures may be interesting, but it is the firmness
of what he wanted and did not want
that raises eyebrows: when does the quixotic
begin to gel, begin to impress, at what point
of naked surprise?

"I for one will not follow
a policy dictated by Lenin until he knows
the situation more clearly."

Which Lenin hadn't time to,
and parties never did—the rock of nations
like the rock of ages, saw-toothed, half-submerged,
a cranky sputtering lighthouse somewhere, as often
out as lit, a wreck of ships all round,
there's the old barnacled "Workingclass Solidarity,"
and "International Brotherhood" ripped open and awash,
while you can see the sleekit "Great-Power Chauvinism"
steaming cannily past on the horizon
as if she had never heard of *cuius regio*.
MacLean wanted neither the maimed ships
nor the paradox of not wanting them
while he painfully trimmed the lighthouse lamp
to let them know that Scotland was not Britain
and writs of captains on the Thames
would never run in grey Clyde waters.

Well, nothing's permanent. It's true he lost—
a voice silenced in November fog. Party
is where he failed, for he believed in people,
not in *partiinost* that as everyone knows
delivers the goods. Does it? Of course.
And if they're damaged in transit you make do?
You do—and don't be so naive about this world!
MacLean was not naive, but

"We are out
for life and all that life can give us"
was what he said, that's what he said.

TAE AN UNKENT SODGER

(wi a thocht for John MacLean)

See you, my stane-kiltit hero
hunkered in majestie on a plinth as square
and cauld as a politician's conscience?

See you, my roond-eened Galahad
pavilioned in splendour, sightlessly
seein naethin and seein it forever?

See you, my lifeless hertless brainless
unkent slauchtered comrade, as donnert in daith
as ye were fushionless in life?

Ye focht a guid fecht
pit MacLean and his like in the Calton
Ye focht a guid fecht
Whae telt ye it was for the workin-classes?
Ye focht a guid fecht
Ye turned yer guns on the wrang enemy.

Gode forgie ye!
Ye fairly dang the stour oot o him jist the same!

SHOUT!

(Tune: *Michael Row the Boat Ashore*)

Shout to the man in Number 10—Independence!
Scotland will be free again—Independence!

The River Tweed is a great divide—Independence!
Tak your stand on the Scottish side—Independence!

shout to the man in Number 10—Independence!
Scotland will be free again—Independence!

Good for the brown man, the black man too—Independence!
Good for me and good for you—Independence!

Shout to the Man in Number 10—Independence!
Scotland will be free again—Independence!

Now Wallace did not die in vain—Independence!
Neither did great John MacLean—Independence!

Shout to the man in Number 10—Independence!
Scotland will be free again—Independence!

MOLADH IAIN RUADH

'Eil thu 'saoilinn, aig a' cheann thall
gun do rinn e tabhartas gun bhuil?
gu robh grian mor ruadh a bheatha
a' dol fodha mu dheireadh air cuan marbh an eatorrais?
nach eil ar dùthaich mar abha i —
na gleannan farsuinn 's na sràthan gun duine annta
ach ceannaichean coimheach 's an carrdean
a' marbhadh nan eun beaga an ainm spors,
fhad's a tha mòrshliochd Scota is Gaidheal Glas
gun aitreabh ach oiraichean breunach nam bailtean-mòra?

A dh' ainneòin uile
tha sinne dìreach mar a bha sinn
'nar nàisean amaideach bhochd
fo stiùradh choigreach.

A dh' ainneòin uile
'snà làithean duaichnidh seo
is e sinne a tha am prìosan;
ach esan, fhad's a mhaireas Alba
bidh feadhainn 'ga chuimhneachadh;
esan a tha saor gu sìorruidh
dìreach mar a bha e riamh.

Co mise a bhith 'sgriobhadh m' a dheidhinn
nach do dh' fhulaing na làithean dorcha
's a' phrìosan còmhla ris?

Co thusa a chuireas clach
air càrn an duine seo?

IN PRAISE OF RED JOHN

Do you think, at the end of it all
that he made a useless offering?
that the great red sun of his life
went down at last on the dead sea of their mediocrity?
is our country not as it was—
the broad glens and the straths without a man in them
but alien hucksters and their friends
murdering the little birds in the name of sport,
while the great race of Scota and Gael Glas
are without a dwelling but the stinking dunghills of the cities?

In spite of all
we are just as we were
a poor foolish nation
under the control of strangers.

In spite of all
in these miserable days
it is we who are in prison;
but he, while Scotland lasts
some will remember him;
he who is free forever
just as he always was.

Who am I to be writing about him
who did not suffer the dark days
in the prison along with him?

Who are you who will put a stone
on the cairn of this man?

ANNI DOLENDI — DOMINO! (1923-1973)

for Nan MacLean Milton

They took the castles of his eyes
and gave them to the grim jailer.

And, as with Wallace,
they gave his singing to the five cold winds.

They drove a tunnel of progress
through the mountain of his head.

They laughed
and gave him to his friends
for burial.

His friends,
who took his right hand and chopped it off,
and said of him: He could not use it anyway.

His left hand they balled into a slogan
and hailed him for a hero.

And then
in the dust of lies
in the slag-hills of forgetfulness,
they buried their Conscience
twice.

Anno doloris . . . anni dolendi . . .
November gripping us,
and the Long Winter of fifty frozen years.

Then suddenly
the whirl of Fortune,
the shock of Destiny
flings up the burning sun

and in on the high season,
in from Rockall,
in through Eriboll,
in from the Islands,
in from the Forties
a jubilee of exaltation

bursts from the maverick seas.

anni dolendi—domino!

and swept in on a billion tons of oil,
swept into the command post,
singing,

elemental,

red,

there stands again
the Permanence of Scotland,
the incorruptible MacLean.

THE MAN IN PETERHEAD

When you've passed your resolutions,

When you feel you've "done your bit,"

And you *think* there's nothing more that you can do,

Why not ACT—and in your action, try to emulate the grip
Of the Man in Peterhead who ACTS FOR YOU?

He is grateful for your money;

He appreciates your cheers;

And your sympathy is ample for his needs:

There are *more effective* things than resolutions, cash, or tears.

Why not give him just a sample, say—of DEEDS?

'Twas for you he garnered knowledge,

Sacrificed his very youth—

For he worked for you until his head was gray.

They are killing him by inches just because he thought the truth:
And having thought it, had the guts to SAY.

And the Truth's a kind of virtue

That the ruling classes fear:

By the foulest means to crush it they have tried.

For Truth, the stones of hate were hurled at prophet and at seer;
For Truth, the gentle Christ was crucified.

In a Rule Britannia prison

John is rotting in a cell,

While Liebknecht from his fortress wanders free.

Then remember, when for Freedom you are turning shot and shell,
There's a greater Freedom "made in Germany."

John was for the Revolution.

That will surely come in time,

For the sacred Flag of Liberty—the Red!

That he bravely kept it flying was the burden of his "crime."
But he keeps it flying yet in Peterhead.

Will you suffer his destruction

On the tyrant's battle-ground?

Will you let the cursed Wrong defeat the Right?

He is One against an Army!—are you going to see him downed?
Are you going to let him die without a FIGHT?

He will pay you back in plenty,

It is YOU who stand to gain;

For his Lion Heart is yours if he is spared.

Then, toilers, for your own sakes UP AND LIBERATE MACLEAN.
You could DO IT—aye, tomorrow—IF YOU DARED!

ARMANN

Fear de dh'àrmainn Mhuile is dòcha

ann a linn eile,

Iain Mac'Illeathain;

ach thilg eachdraidh de dhaoine

a chath às ùr thu;

iolach a' Ghaidheil

a' tighinn á cliabh na Galldachd;

nam biodh seasmhachd as a lasair

sgrìobhte "Saorsa" air nèamh Alba fhathast.

WARRIOR

In another age

you might have been a "warrior of Mull,"

John MacLean;

the history of your people flung you

into a new battle:

the Gael's exultant cry

coming from the chest of the Lowlands;

if only the flame lasted

it would write "Freedom" on Scotland's sky yet.

NOTES

Clann Ghill-Eain (*Clan MacLean*)

SOMHAIRLE MACGILL-EAIN
(*Sorley Maclean*)

From *Dain Do Eimhir* (1943). The Gaelic spelling differs from the version in the *Dain Eile* section of the 1943 book, but is now the definitive choice of the poet. The English translation is also the work of the poet.

John MacLean (1879-1923)

HUGH MACDIARMID

From *Stony Limits and Other Poems* (1934)

To John MacLean tortured in a
Capitalist Prison

DORA MONTEFIORE

Published on 14th November 1918 in *The Call*, organ of the British Socialist Party.

Dominie, Dominie

MATT MCGINN

From the magazine *Chapbook*, Vol. 4, No. 1.

The John MacLean March

HAMISH HENDERSON

This song was specially written for and sung at the John MacLean Memorial Meeting in St Andrew's Hall in Glasgow, 1948, at the twenty-fifth commemoration of the death of John MacLean. The tune is traditional and has been arranged by the poet.

Mr John MacLean, M.P.

AUTHOR UNKNOWN

An election ballad of 1918, originally published as a broadsheet.

Red Star

ANDREW TANNAHILL

First Publication. The poet glosses "Steenie's howf" as St Stephen's (Westminster) based on the pronunciation of related words, such as "Stevenson," in Scots. But there is a sub-bonus in that St Stephen, the first Christian martyr, was stoned to death. "Stane" and "steen" are Scots for "stone."

John MacLean Martyr

SYDNEY GOODSIR SMITH

From *The Devil's Waltz* (1946). The present text is altered slightly.

The Ballant o John MacLean

SYDNEY GOODSIR SMITH

From *The Devil's Waltz* (1946). This text is also changed a little.

To the Memory of John MacLean, M.A.

MATTHEW BIRD

Published by the Scottish Workers' Republican Party John MacLean Memorial Fund in 1923 and printed by the Bakunin Press, 13 Burnbank Gardens, Glasgow, and London.

fae A Cyle o MacLeans

T. S. LAW

First publication, being two sections of a four-part cycle of poems.

The Krassiv Poem
From *Lucky Poet* (1943).

HUGH MACDIARMID

Perfervidum Ingenium Scotorum
(The Ardent Spirit of the Scots)

THURSO BERWICK

From the magazine *Chapbook*, Vol. 4, No. 2. The title of this song is from the lesser-known *Scotorum praeferenda ingenia*, the ardent tempers of the Scots—ref. Buchanan, *Hist. Scot.* XVI.li.

On John MacLean

JOHN KINCAID

From *Fowsom Reel* (1949).

The Darg o John MacLean

ALASTAIR MACKIE

First publication.

The Accuser

JOHN KINCAID

From *Fowsom Reel* (1949).

Words for John MacLean

ALAN BOLD

First publication.

Til John MacLean

TOM SCOTT

First publication.

Sic a Land as This

GEORGE HARDIE

From the leaflet *Scotia 7*. In order of place in the poem, the three quotes are from *The Brus* by John Barbour, *The Dreame* by Sir David Lyndsay, and *The Ghaists* by Robert Fergusson.

Remember John MacLean

IAN DAVISON

First publication.

John MacLean

DAVID MORRISON

From *Paddy's Mairket* (1973).

Til the Citie o John MacLean

THURSO BERWICK

From *Fowsom Reel* (1949).

The Hunters

FARQUHAR MCLAY

First publication.

On John MacLean

EDWIN MORGAN

First publication. The first quote is from John MacLean's 1922 Election Address, the second from his paper *Vanguard*, December 1920, and the third from his Speech from the Dock on 9 May 1918 in Edinburgh. The complete Latin tag is *cuius regio, eius religio* (It's the ruler of the territory who decides the religion). *Partiinost* means "Party spirit."

The Freedom-Come-All-Ye
From *Ding-Dong-Dollar* (1961).

HAMISH HENDERSON

Tae an Unkent Sodger

DONALD CAMPBELL

From the magazine *Akros*, Vol. 7, No. 21. The present text is an altered version.

Shout!

THURSO BERWICK

Loudspeaker election song 1967, first published in the magazine *Chapbook*, Vol. 4, No. 6.

Moladh Iain Ruaidh (*In Praise of Red John*)

UILLIAM NEILL
(William Neill)

First publication. "Scota" and "Gaidheal" are eponymous legendary ancestors of the Scoti. The translation is by the poet.

Anni Dolendi — Domino! (1923 - 1973)
(The Years we suffered — Finished!)

THURSO BERWICK

First publication. "Anno doloris . . . anni dolendi" may be glossed "In the year of our sorrow . . . through the years we had to suffer" or "Fae the year o oor dool thru the years we'd tae thole." The almost archaic "Domino!" is still used in the Glasgow area in an exclamatory way.

The Man in Peterhead

JOHN S. CLARKE

A twopenny broadsheet published in 1918 by the Women's Section of the Glasgow District Council of the British Socialist Party. Although not written as a song, it is now being sung to the tune *John Hardie*. Peterhead is the prison on the east coast of Scotland where John MacLean was sent to penal servitude.

Armman (*Warrior*)

RUARAI DH MAC THOMAS
(Derick Thomson)

First publication. The translation is by the poet.

GLOSSARY

ayle, off the straight, oblique
athooten, without
auntran, occasional (casual)

barley-bree, whisky
beezeed-up, smartened
bellowses, bellows (to mend), i.e. breathless
biggit, built
birl, twist, spin, turn
blate, shy, bashful
bluidwyre, blood-guilty
blye, glad
breenge, move forward with vigour

broukit, sooty, dirty (but sometimes tear-stained)
bumbaized, stupefied
byordnar, extraordinary
byspale, remarkable person

callants, young lands
cannily, craftily
cantie, cheerful
causey, roadway
cheynes, chains
clachan, small village
clanjamprey, commonality, commonalty

conjunk, conjoined
craw, crow
croon, *crown*, crown
crouselly, merrily
cuijs, fools
cyle, coil, circle

dang, beat
darg, task
dawin, dawning
deaved, deafened
dern, hide, conceal
dirl, ringing sound upon impact, thrill
dichin, wiping
doon-drag, impediment, dead-weight
dool, sorrow
donnert, stupid, dazed
doucelie, sweetly, of gentle manner
dowie, sad
downa (*thole*), reluctant (to endure)
doys, fools
dree, endure, suffer, bear
dunnie, basement back-end of a tenement
close
dunt, thud
dwaums, dreams, trances
dwine, decay, waste away

(*naether*) *eechie nor ochie*, (neither) one thing nor another, noncommittal
eident, earnest, industrious
eiket, added, yoked
eitle, intend, hanker

fechter, fighter
fiere, comrade
flichterin, flickering
forfochen, exhausted
fouth, plenty, abundance
freit, phantasm
fremit, strange, foreign
frichtfu, terrible, frightful
furbye, over and above, besides
gallus, of proud bearing, swaggering
garred, *gari*, made (compelled)
geans, wild cherries
gif, if
glaur, mud
glegly, sharply, vividly
gleid, glow
glengairrie, glengarry, a type of Highland bonnet
glinkin, gleaming
girnin, snarling
gowd, gold
gushet, the Y-arm shape of a dividing road
hadarums, the bagpipe

happit, concealed, covered-over
harns, brains
hauders-on, riveters' mates
hecht, exclamatory sound
heidarum-hodarum, the braggart mores of the Scottish military establishments, especially so of the Highland regiments.
heelster-gowdie, head-over-heels
heist, hoist, lift
herriet, *herryit*, harried, plundered
hoodies, crows
horallie, handless (in the sense of turning around aimlessly like a wheel)

jump, smart, neat

keist, cast
kenspeckle, well-known
kythed, appeared (seemed to look like)

laer, *lear*, knowledge, learning, custom
larrach, heap of ruins
laverock, lark
leal, loyal, true
leid, language or the genius of its theory, idiom or words
lethers, ladders
lillie, lovely
loanings, country lanes or narrow streets and housing thereof
loe, love
lowes, flames, glows
lowps, leaps, jumps
lowsed, freed, loosened
makars, poets
maik, match, equal
mant, speak with an impediment, stammer
memore, memory
menesless, graceless
middis, middle
mimpin, affected in speech
mowt, mouth (speak), open the mouth to speak

neb-music, nasal-sounding music in imitation of piping
neypsie, prim ("stuck-up")

oncairrie, reprehensible behaviour

paerochen, parish
peare-kistit, pear-chested
pech, gasp
pint, point
plorie, ground ravaged into mud by tramping, etc.

ploy, escapade
pooter (*peerie*), pear-shaped top (child's toy)

quine, girl

raucle, vigorous
redd, cleared, cleaned
reid, red
remeid, remedy, salvation, succour, help, reward
rieved, torn, plundered
rings, reigns
roch, rough
rottans, rats
rowpit, sold by public auction

screichan, screeching
scunners, sickening (loathsome) people
sheeve, slice
shi-pit, inferior, weak
skaith, harm, hurt
skech, to obtain by various means
sklimmed, climbed
slaughtered, slaughtered
sleekit, sly, slippery-mannered
smooored, covered
snell, piercingly cold
solist, anxious
speils, speaks a commentary phrased to confound while selling wares, positioning, or making propaganda of any kind

stab, wooden post
stacherin, *staucheran*, staggering
sterin, restless, hard to control
stern, star
stookie, fool, a person stiff as a statue, statue
stounds, throbs
stour, dust
stourie, austere
stuid, stood, "stuid us idle" — stood or made us unemployed

stuidie, steady
sweir, loath, reluctant

taen, taken
tascal(py), traditionally, money paid to informers, especially in the Highlands following cattle-rieving. But here used to denote the Capitalist reward to its industrial and commercial spies, informers, renegades and other such runnings dogs
teuchter, friendly name for a Highlander
thrang, busy, throng
thrawn, stubborn
the-tyme, while, as
thirlit, bound to by law or custom
thrummlin, trembling
tint, *tynt*, lost
tirl, sound (of piping), ringing sound
tods, foxes
touselt, dishevelled
trachelt, fatigued
trauchle, drudgery
tuimt, emptied

ugsom, disgusting, frightful
umwhile, sometime

vauntie, happy
virr, vigour

waanchancilie, unluckily
ward, word
wark-loom, working gear, tools, etc
warslan, wrestling
weird, fate
wheesh, hush
whigmaleerie, nonsensicality
whiles, at times
wrocht, fashioned
wyte, blame

yirth, earth